

## Top Ten Reasons We Need to Give to This Church

Fall 2017

I am a mother of three, so I have become accustomed to saying some pretty strange things I never thought I would say. Things like, “we don’t put our mouths on the dishwasher” and “diaper cream isn’t for hair”. But here’s another kind of strange thing I find myself saying these days: “I am a member of the Board of Stewardship.”

I am a member of the Board of Stewardship because . . . well, they asked my husband Bill first, but he was unavailable. So he invoked a little-known law of spousal interchangeability for church board service. But, honestly, he was only able to do that because he knows how much I love the church.

**So now I’m going to do what we in the fundraising world call, “The Ask”.**

I feel rather bold these days to do this for a number of reasons. First, I was here when the results of the 1 million dollar plus Reach and Renew capital campaign were revealed, and I served on the committee that designed the STEPPING UP campaign last year, in which we accomplished a goal that defied common wisdom. So I am confident, based on our history, you will respond generously.

Second, I am asking boldly because I need this community of faith, and I think most of you do too. To illustrate the point, I wrote the following.

### TOP TEN LIST OF REASONS THAT I . . . THAT WE NEED THIS CHURCH

**Number 10.** Because it’s good for the soul to see the chancel steps full of kids, and it’s good for their parents’ souls to get to turn them over to Sunday School or the nursery for a little while.

**Number 9.** Because Rev. Jerry Hancock and the folks of the prison ministry keep going behind the walls and coming back and telling their powerful stories of pain and redemption and restorative justice.

**Number 8.** Because during the time with children, Director of Christian Education, Jeff Rabe can make us laugh and teach us all a profound lesson at the same time. And you know you can’t wait to see what his Halloween costume will be.

**Number 7.** Because on many Sundays we come out of habit, but then Associate Minister Anne’s gentle voice and careful words help us to feel prayerful, and we have a surprising moment of grace.

**Number 6.** Because Don, the Director of Music Ministry’s music can be so filled with the Spirit, and he plays a mean postlude.

**Number 5.** Because Senior Minister Eldonna is really good at reminding us that God is not done with us yet.

**Number 4.** Because no one is going to tell you how to think here, or tell you not to have doubts or not to ask questions.

**Number 3.** Because when you look up at the newly painted tower, or when you look around the newly remodeled parts of the building, it reminds you how much we can do together, and the despair that can sometimes come creeping in gets pushed back, replaced with hope, and courage and excitement.

**Number 2.** Because we can get to feeling helpless and hopeless about the pain and injustices of the world, but through the wider ministries of the United Church of Christ we are able to reach out and making a difference, in places like Puerto Rico and Houston, in California and Charlottesville and Washington DC, and around the world. We could have pulled back this last year, on the amount that we send beyond the walls of this church, when these walls needed renovation, or we could have cut staff. But we chose another, daring way.

And the **number one** reason I think we all need this church:

Because it's 2017, and yet racism and sexism and able-ism and heterosexism and all kinds of destructive -isms are still with us; we see the ugliness of it resurgent all over the news. But our community preaches a gospel of Love that challenges those forces and saves lives. Because "whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here." And if you're anything like me, you need to be on the side of LOVE.

I'm going to be bold to ask for your support, because I know that generosity changes everything. I hope you will prayerfully consider how your pledge can help us reach our goal this year.

Thanks for your generosity.

Jessica Taft  
Board of Stewardship